

# **Tippecanoe County Coordinated Human Services Transit Plan**

## **Appendix 10: November 16, 2012 Annual Review and Assessment Meeting**

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**Prepared by the Area Plan Commission of Tippecanoe County  
for Lafayette, West Lafayette, Dayton, Battle Ground, Clarks Hill and  
Tippecanoe County**

## ***Meeting Minutes***

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**Area Planning Commission of Tippecanoe County  
Coordinated Human Services Transit Plan  
Annual Assessment Meeting – DRAFT Minutes  
November 16, 2012  
Tippecanoe Room, Tippecanoe County Office Building**

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- I. **Purpose:** Stakeholders met for the fourth annual assessment of the Coordinated Human Services Transit Plan (CHSTP). The CHSTP mission is to reduce and remove obstacles and improve transportation options for disabled, elderly and low income persons. The Plan requires an annual meeting of stakeholders to: report progress, facilitate the exchange of information, and identify new challenges.

II. **Stakeholders Present:**

Nathaniel Metz, Prompt Ambulance  
Kelli Stump, Fairfield Township Trustee's Office  
Dia Brown, Lafayette Transitional Housing Center  
Rhonda Jones, Wabash Center  
Tonya Agnew, CityBus  
John Connell, CityBus  
Sallie Fahey, Area Plan Commission  
John Thomas, Area Plan Commission  
Doug Poad, Area Plan Commission  
Tony Greep, Federal Transit Administration (via telephone)

III. **4<sup>th</sup> Year Status Report**

Doug briefly reviewed the minutes of last year's meeting. He highlighted some of the challenges, issues and projects that were documented. He reported there was meaningful discussion during the open forum. Several topics discussed included snow removal and the travel training program.

Last year's meeting also included discussion of the long-range transportation plan. Doug reported that in previous plans, the focus was mainly on road projects. The new plan is intermodal and looks at all transportation modes.

Doug asked the agencies attending if they could provide a status report. However, everyone first introduced themselves. While doing so, Dia stated that the travel training program would be a tremendous help to her. John Connell followed up and provided contact information.

**Area Plan Commission**

John highlighted APC's work status by using last year's summary as a guide.

1. An example of a list of available transportation resources has been found. A local brochure will be developed sometime next year and some of the contact information has already been put together.

Doug added that the brochure will include public and private providers.

2. There has been no progress on the thoroughfare plan.
3. The meeting today fulfills the requirement to hold an annual meeting.
4. APC staff continues to assist CityBus in writing and reviewing grants for Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom funds. Staff is also seeking funds for additional ADA improvements to the Depot.
6. A complete streets policy was adopted as part of the new Metropolitan Transportation Plan for 2040. All jurisdictions are now required to include provisions for all transportation modes when reconstructing or building new roads.
7. There is not much to report about snow removal since there was very little this past year.
8. APC continues to stay in contact with the Convention and Visitors Bureau. Packets continue to be provided to incoming Purdue freshman and they do include transit information.
9. Sallie continues to stay in touch with our State legislators reminding them of the need to locate state offices on transit lines.
10. There has been some progress on getting sidewalks on SR 38. The city is currently designing the sidewalk from Creasy Lane to Kingsway Lane.
11. The APC staff has not contacted Bev Shaw or Belinda Kyger regarding low hanging branches over sidewalks. John asked if anyone had called them regarding the subject and there was no response from participants.
12. Significant progress has been made in developing ADA plans, especially in the smaller towns of Clarks Hill, Dayton and Battle Ground. The cities and county have also made significant progress in developing transition plans. All anticipate meeting end of the year deadlines.
13. The new Metropolitan Transportation Plan for 2040 focuses more on sidewalks, trails and transit than past plans. John reported that when US 52 is reconstructed in Lafayette, sidewalks will be constructed on both sides for most of the project's length.

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan for 2040 includes a commitment to use 10% of the Federal Highway Funds for independent trail and sidewalk projects.

## CityBus

John Connell reported on current CityBus efforts, initiatives and service.

CityBus is looking to improve its paratransit Access service. Currently when a person schedules a trip, there is a thirty minute pick up window. If a trip is scheduled for 9:00, the Access van can come as early as 8:45 or as late as 9:15. Riders are inconvenienced because they have to continually watch for the van the entire time.

CityBus wants to pursue an automated telephone service that will call and let the rider know the van will be arriving shortly. It would improve the quality of service to the riders. They would no longer have to wait up to a half an hour. It would also increase CityBus's productivity. Currently there is a five minute waiting rule for the van. By letting the rider know that the van will be there in a few minutes, the person can be ready to go. Shortening the waiting time at each stop frees up time for additional service.

Doug asked if CityBus would like to see this project be included in the Plan.

John requests that this identified need and strategy/project be incorporated into the Coordinated Human Services Transit Plan.

John Thomas asked if there are GPS units on each van.

John Connell replied that there are mobile data units on each vehicle and it reports all of the data back to operations. The "Call-Ahead" service would be a step up. Over the past few years the cost of this type of technology has come down in price.

### **Plan Action**

The Call-Ahead service/project address the newly identified need and it will be incorporated into the Coordinate Human Services Transit Plan.

## Wabash Center

Rhonda Jones reported on current Wabash Center issues and progress.

1. Rhonda reported that their van fleet is in good shape
2. CityBus have been very helpful.
3. She reported on the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting that was held last week. A large part of the conversation and discussion was focused on providing service with very few financial resources. Many agencies are cutting back or eliminating service. The Tippecanoe County Council on Aging has had to reduce its service to only three days a week. This is happening across the region and state.

The problem is twofold. Agencies do not have enough funds to operate and riders are not donating enough for the service.

She stated that this is a concern and needs to be addressed.

Rhonda also reported that the County Council on Aging did not have enough funds to cover the 20% match for a 5310 van last year.

Doug reported that the County Council on Aging is looking into a program called Transportation Reimbursement and Information Project, or TRIPS, to help with senior transportation.

4. Rhonda mentioned that the City has been doing an awesome job on repairing sidewalks but the sidewalk by the city parking lot is broken and needs repair.
5. Rhonda said that the Center will probably apply for vans this year.
6. She reported that the 5310 program is now offering sedans in addition to the vans.

#### **IV. Issues and Challenges, ideas for solutions, and open discussion:**

Doug started off the discussion by asking those in attendance if there is a need for a formal update of the Plan. Federal guidance states that the plan needs to be updated every five years. APC staff discussed this issue and feels the plan is, in essence, updated every year through the agency reports and open forum discussion.

Tony stated it is great to have annual meetings, but information does change over time. New Census data is available and it should be looked at.

Doug replied that there has not been a review of the new data. He added that it is challenging to use it due to high error rates and small sampling sizes in the American Community Survey.

Sallie asked if there were any best practices available.

Tony mentioned that he would look into it.

Doug stated that he received a phone call earlier in the week from Kenneth Noble. His company is called Noble Mobile LLC and they provide wheel chair lift equipped transportation service for any type of trip whether it be for medical, shopping or social. It's a sister company to Life Span Health Service which is a full line health care agency. Doug added that they have a web site and he has the web address if anyone is interested in it.

Doug reported that the APC did receive a letter about a month ago from a lady who is wheel chair bound. She lives near the Town of Battle Ground. The wheel chair she has is electric and most of the transportation companies she has contacted can only accommodate push type chairs. She stated that there are only a few companies that offer electric chair service and it is very limited and expensive.

Rhonda mentioned that there is a transportation wheel chair that Wabash Center uses a lot. She added that the letter writer should be able to get one from Medicaid.

Sallie asked if Medicaid would still pay for it if they had already paid for the electric wheel chair.

Rhonda said they should because it is only a transport chair or a big stroller. Wabash Center uses them for emergency evacuations.

Nathaniel stated they provide wheel chair service. Since September 1<sup>st</sup>, they have transported over 2,000 trips. He added that they limit the service because of finances. Ninety percent of the trips are paid for by Medicaid and the other 10% is written off.

The issue they have noticed is loss of the person's independence. Losing the use of their electric wheel chair is a big deal.

One of the problems faced by all providers is that their vehicles are built to accept a standard ADA design of wheel chair. The mobility aid industry has subsequently made all type of options. The challenge is how to secure the devices in the vehicles.

Nathaniel added that one of his issues is the combined weight of the person and power chair. The lift requires a lot of power to support the weight. To address this issue, they have implemented a patient evaluation system. In the past they have even helped find a wheel chair that is comfortable for the person as well as work with their power lifts.

Nathaniel mentioned the challenges with side and rear loading vans. He added it is difficult to get the power chairs in and then turn them around in a side loading van. A rear loading van can handle the weight, but they have their own challenges.

Rhonda stated that the 5310 program does not allow the purchase of rear loading vans.

Doug restated the fact that more and more people are using electric chairs. He asked what can be done.

John Thomas asked if the rear loading vans are unsafe.

Nathaniel replied that you are loading from the road. You need the room when parked, and also need to set up safety cones.

Doug asked if the guide of transportation options should include information about what type of chairs can be transported.

Sallie added that it would be helpful to people before they purchase a chair.

John Connell stated that ADA does spell out that wheel chairs do not exceed 600 pounds (with the person) or exceed 30" in width and 42" in length. Buses have been designed to those standards. If a person buys or modifies a chair outside those parameters, it makes

finding transportation more difficult. He felt that type of information should be noted in the brochure.

Nathaniel stated that they provide service to a very large area. One service they provide is bariatric transportation service. With the current market, the company struggles financially in providing it. The cost of the equipment is expensive and Medicaid only covers so much.

Sallie added that this information needs to be given to Randy Fairchild at County Veterans Service Office. When veterans move into the area, they need to know what kind of mobility device would be compatible with local transportation providers.

John Connell added that during the interview process, they also look at wheel chairs or mobile devices. If they see any issues, they will see if it can be fixed. They have seen people add stuff that prevents them securing the chair in the bus.

Sallie asked if there is a difference in resources offered by Medicaid and resources offered by Medicare.

Nathaniel replied that Medicare does not provide any money for transportation services.

John Connell asked if the new healthcare law will have any implications.

Nathaniel said that it will and explained that right now they can only bill for loaded miles. The Affordable Care Act will expand how billing can be done. They will now be able to itemize and can include wait time and some other services.

Nathaniel presented a new type of service called the Community Paramedic Program. This is when paramedics make house calls and evaluate the patient and their needs. Since the paramedics are licensed, they can prescribe antibiotics, provide wound care and make physician referrals. He added that many low income households get their primary care through hospital emergency rooms. Right now they cannot charge for these services, but with the new act and through partnerships, the services can be reimbursed. Hospitals might offer this service instead of continually seeing patients return to the emergency room.

Sallie asked how the Affordable Care Act will affect Wabash Center.

Rhonda replied that she has been at the Center for six years and she has seen the reimbursement plan change five times. She added that it will probably change again after the first of the year. The State wants to get away from group homes. Now there can be no fewer than three people and no more than five in a home. They will lose some of their economies of scale and costs will increase.

The State wants to abolish the waiting list for Medicaid waivers. The way they are doing it is by starting "facility based service." There is a waiting list of over 15,000 individuals in the state and it takes anywhere from 8 to 12 years to get the waiver. There are approximately 450 people in Tippecanoe County on that list.

John Connell asked what a wavier is.

Rhonda replied that if a person is diagnosed with a disability before the age of 22, they are placed on a Medicaid waiver. The waiver will provide anything the person needs based on the disability. If you have a child who is diagnosed early, they are well cared for. She added that parents need to get their children on the waiting list when they are young due to the long wait times for getting service after children turn 22. If you haven't got them on the waiver system, they would just sit at home without support. GLASS is starting to step up and inform parents about the process. Wabash Center services are Medicaid services.

Additional discussion followed about the waiver process and funding. In summary, parents and guardians need to start the application process earlier and the state needs to make processing more timely.

Doug asked Kelli what they are seeing at the township level.

Kelli stated that they continue to see the need for transportation services to their office on Wabash Avenue. There is no direct bus service to the office and it is a 10 to 12 minute walk to the nearest bus stop. For a healthy person it is not difficult, but for the elderly and handicapped person it is.

The Trustees office provides emergency assistant. For someone who has an emergency, they cannot wait a week to use Access or Care-A-Van. Without transportation services to the office, they are seeing a lot of families not able to meet their basic needs. The offices are open Monday through Friday. Kelli asked if there could be a bus route just for those days and maybe just in the morning.

John Thomas asked if the Trustee reimburses for taxi service.

Kelli replied that they provide bus tokens but do not reimburse for taxi service.

John Connell asked how many people seek assistance.

Kelli replied that they usually have three to five scheduled appointments and maybe five to ten walk-ins during the day. She added that most people walk to the office and some have family or friends bring them.

Discussion then focused on the possibility of relocating the office. Discussion included putting a satellite office in the Depot when CityBus moves to the new transfer building. Another would be to schedule the appointments and meet at the Depot instead of the Trustee office.

Discussion continued about taxi reimbursement.



**V. MAP 21, Section 5310, 5316 and 5317:**

Doug provided background information about the new federal transportation funding act called MAP-21. Some of the programs under the previous act were combined (New Freedom into 5310) and some were eliminated (Job Access Reverse Commute). Doug then reviewed how those funds have been used in Tippecanoe County. He also referred to the handout which provided details about the 5310 program. Doug stated that there is not much information about the program available at this time. For now, INDOT is following the guide lines from last year. He added that these funds may be used for operating assistance.

Rhonda mentioned that there may be local funding shortfalls since distribution will be based on population. The funding may go to large population areas like Marion County and not to counties like Benton County which has a small population.

Tony stated that the revised circular for 5310 has not come out. FTA will use the one that is currently available. Right now there is no deadline for the release of new information.

John Thomas asked if the concerns for how the funds will be distributed by population are founded.

Tony replied that the distribution of funds will be formula base rather than discretionary based.

Nathaniel stated that an issue they see is the perception that rural areas need fewer resources. He feels that on a ratio per person basis, more resources are needed. He gave an example of services they provide in Rensselaer. Each trip in a rural area is more expensive.

Rhonda stated that is also the specific challenge senior centers face.

Discussion continued and included the cost of providing rural transportation services, transportation service for dialysis patients, the cost associated for a trip, services that have been discontinued in Crawfordsville, and medical facilities located in rural towns.

Sallie stated that this is a multifaceted problem. Our task is to look at it from one point of view but it is appropriate to look at other potential ways to solve the problem. There may not be a transportation solution and it needs to be brought to the attention of those who created the problem.

Doug closed the meeting by thanking everyone for coming and stating that there was good discussion. APC will assemble the information as has been done previously. He stated that APC will work on the resource guide and Sallie asked those attending for their review of the draft resource guide and suggestions on where to distribute them.

## Meeting Agenda

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THE

# Area Plan Commission

of TIPPECANOE COUNTY

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SALLIE DELL FAHEY  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### Tippecanoe County Coordinated Human Service Transit Plan Annual Review and Assessment Meeting

Tippecanoe Room, Tippecanoe County Office Building

20 North 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Lafayette, IN

November 16, 2012

10:00 a.m.

#### Meeting Agenda

- 1) *Welcome and Introductions*
- 2) *Brief Review of the December 2011 Annual Assessment Meeting Summary*
- 3) *Progress Reports*
  - Area Plan
  - CityBus
  - Wabash Center
  - Lafayette Adult Resource Academy
  - Tippecanoe County Council on Aging
  - Others
- 4) *Issues and challenges and ideas for solutions – Open Discussion*
- 5) *MAP 21 – Section 5310, 5316 and 5317 funds*

Planning for Lafayette, West Lafayette, Dayton, Battle Ground, Clarks Hill and Tippecanoe County

## Meeting Attendance

## Meeting Sign-In Sheet

Tippecanoe County Coordinated Human Services Transit Plan  
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November 16, 2012

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